

California Department of Water Resources

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## **FISH PASSAGE IMPROVEMENT**

February 2003

An Element of CALFED's  
Ecosystem Restoration Program

Department of  
Water Resources

Bulletin 250-2002

Fish Passage  
Improvement  
2003

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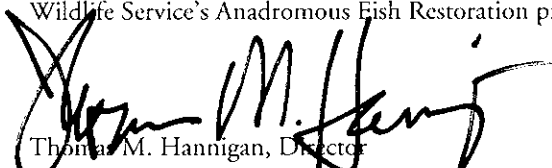
# Foreword

This inaugural publication of Bulletin 250, *Fish Passage Improvement*, contributes significantly to our understanding of how California can help revitalize our salmon and steelhead fisheries. We at the Department of Fish and Game and Department of Water Resources welcome such a detailed contribution to the literature of protecting the state's anadromous fish. There are many reasons for the decline of migrating salmon and steelhead in our rivers and streams—the loss of riparian vegetation, poor water quality, unscreened diversions, and barriers to fish passage. Bulletin 250 identifies man-made structures in the watersheds of the San Francisco Bay Area and the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, and details how selected structures impede fish migration and what is being done about them.

This bulletin represents an important contribution to the protection and recovery of listed anadromous salmonid species in California. It is an example of a capacity-building process that enhances the ability of both agencies to fulfill their mandates and collaborate on future efforts to improve fish passage in California. .

Through coordinating resources and authorities, a comprehensive California fish passage program is vital towards identifying, prioritizing, and treating migration barriers so that unimpeded migration of California's salmonid populations is achieved. In addition, this information contributes to strategies for ensuring future water supply reliability.

This publication, with its valuable inventories of potential fish-passage barriers, will help fulfill California State anadromous fish restoration objectives; those of CALFED's Ecosystem Restoration Plan; and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Anadromous Fish Restoration programs.



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## Table of Contents

<b>Foreword.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Organization.....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>xii</b>

All entries in this table  
are active links.

### **Chapter 1. The Problem: Fewer Salmon and Steelhead in the Central Valley and San Francisco Bay Area..... 1-1**

Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley .....	1-1
Spring runs .....	1-1
Winter runs .....	1-1
Fall and late-fall runs .....	1-2
Declining habitat .....	1-2
Steelhead in the Central Valley and Bay Area .....	1-3
How Structures in Rivers and Streams Contribute to the Problem .....	1-4
Types of Structural Fish Passage Barriers .....	1-5
Dams .....	1-5
Gravel Pits .....	1-5
Roads and Infrastructure .....	1-5
Literature Cited .....	1-7

### **Chapter 2. Solving the Problem..... 2-1**

Historical perspective of fish passage improvement.....	2-1
Fish Passage Improvement Program .....	2-2
Priorities for Fish Passage Projects.....	2-3
Coordination with other agencies and the public.....	2-3
Stream Structure Inventory .....	2-4
Defining Fish Passage Problems.....	2-5
Local Assistance .....	2-5
Literature Cited .....	2-7

### **Chapter 3. Existing Habitat Conditions and Status of Fish Populations..... 3-1**

#### **Sacramento River and Tributaries**

<b>Battle Creek, Tehama County.....</b>	<b>3-3</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-3
General Description .....	3-3
<b>Big Chico Creek, Butte County .....</b>	<b>3-7</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-7
General Description .....	3-7
<b>Butte Creek, Butte, Sutter and Colusa Counties.....</b>	<b>3-10</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-10
General Description .....	3-10
<b>Clear Creek, Shasta County.....</b>	<b>3-13</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-13
General Description .....	3-13
<b>Mill Creek, Tehama County .....</b>	<b>3-16</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-16
General Description .....	3-16

<b>Sacramento River, Upstream of Feather River .....</b>	<b>3-18</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-18
General Description .....	3-19
<b>Yuba River, Yuba County .....</b>	<b>3-22</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-22
General Description .....	3-22

#### **Lower Sacramento River and Delta Tributaries**

<b>Cosumnes River, Sacramento County .....</b>	<b>3-27</b>
Potential Impediment to Anadromous Fish Migration .....	3-27
General Description .....	3-27
<b>Dry Creek, Placer County .....</b>	<b>3-29</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-29
General Description .....	3-29
<b>Lower Sacramento River.....</b>	<b>3-32</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-32
General Description .....	3-32
<b>Murphy Creek, Amador and San Joaquin Counties.....</b>	<b>3-35</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-35
General Description .....	3-35
<b>Putah Creek, Yolo, Napa and Lake Counties .....</b>	<b>3-36</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-36
General Description .....	3-36

#### **San Joaquin River and Tributaries**

<b>Calaveras River, San Joaquin and Calaveras Counties.....</b>	<b>3-41</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-41
General Description .....	3-41
<b>Merced River, Merced and Mariposa Counties.....</b>	<b>3-43</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-43
General Description .....	3-44
<b>Stanislaus River, San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties .....</b>	<b>3-46</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-46
General Description .....	3-46
<b>Tuolumne River, Stanislaus and Tuolumne Counties .....</b>	<b>3-50</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-50
General Description .....	3-50

#### **Bay Area and Delta**

<b>Alameda Creek and tributaries, Alameda .....</b>	<b>3-55</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-55
General Description .....	3-55
Tributaries .....	3-57
Arroyo Valle.....	3-57
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-57
General Description .....	3-57
Arroyo Mocho.....	3-59
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-59
General Description .....	3-59
Calaveras Creek .....	3-61
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-61
General Description .....	3-61
Arroyo de la Laguna.....	3-62
Pirate Creek.....	3-62
San Antonio Creek .....	3-62
Stoneybrook Creek.....	3-62
Valpe Creek.....	3-62

Welsh Creek .....	3-62
Sinbad Creek .....	3-63
<b>San Francisquito Creek, Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties.....</b>	<b>3-63</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-63
General Description .....	3-63
Tributary.....	3-65
Los Trancos Creek .....	3-65
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-65
General Description .....	3-65
<b>Marsh Creek, Contra Costa County.....</b>	<b>3-67</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-67
General Description .....	3-67
<b>San Lorenzo Creek, Alameda County.....</b>	<b>3-69</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Passage .....	3-69
General Description .....	3-70
<b>York Creek, Napa County.....</b>	<b>3-72</b>
Potential Impediments to Anadromous Fish Migration.....	3-72
General Description .....	3-73
 <b>Chapter 4. Current Program Activities.....</b>	 <b>4-1</b>
 <b><u>Upper Sacramento River and Tributaries</u></b>	
Battle Creek – Shasta and Tehama Counties .....	4-4
Iron Canyon and Bear Hole Fish Passage Project, Big Chico Creek – Butte County .....	4-7
Butte Creek, Lower Butte Creek, Sutter Bypass – Butte County .....	4-9
Saeltzer Dam Berm, Clear Creek – Shasta County .....	4-12
Mill Creek –Tehama County .....	4-13
Daguerre Point Dam–Yuba River.....	4-15
Harry L. Englebright Dam-Yuba River.....	4-17
 <b><u>Lower Sacramento River and Delta Tributaries</u></b>	
Cosumnes River – Sacramento County .....	4-20
Dry Creek – Sacramento and Placer Counties .....	4-22
Murphy Creek – Amador and San Joaquin Counties.....	4-24
Lower Putah Creek – Yolo County.....	4-26
Fremont Weir, Sacramento River – Yolo County .....	4-28
Through-Delta Facility, Yolo Bypass - Yolo County.....	4-29
 <b><u>San Joaquin River and Tributaries</u></b>	
Calaveras River – Calaveras County.....	4-32
Merced River – Merced County.....	4-36
Stanislaus River – Stanislaus County .....	4-38
Dennett Dam, Tuolumne River – Stanislaus County .....	4-40
 <b><u>Bay Area and Delta</u></b>	
Alameda Creek – Alameda County.....	4-42
Los Trancos Creek – Santa Clara County.....	4-46
Drop Structure, Marsh Creek – Contra Costa County .....	4-47
San Francisquito Creek – San Mateo County .....	4-49
San Lorenzo Creek - Alameda County.....	4-51
York Creek – Napa County.....	4-53

**Appendix A: Known Structures Within CALFED ERP Geographic Scope**

**Appendix B: Applicable Laws and Examples of Fish Passage Programs at Other Agencies**

**Appendix C: Structure Removal Examples and Challenges**

**Appendix D: Evolutionarily Significant Units, Critical Habitat, and Essential Fish Habitat**

**Appendix E: Literature Cited**

**Figures**

Figure 1. Fish Passage Improvement Program Geographic Scope .....	after Executive Summary
Figure 2. Steelhead trout ESU: <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 3. Chinook Salmon ESU: <i>Oncorhynchus tshawytscha</i> .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 4. Critical Habitat for Spring-run Chinook Salmon .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 5. Critical Habitat for Winter-run Chinook Salmon .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 6. Critical Habitat for Central Valley and Central California Coast Steelhead ESUs .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 7. Essential Fish Habitat for Spring-run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 8. Essential Fish Habitat for Winter-run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 9. Essential Fish Habitat for Fall-run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 10. Essential Fish Habitat for Late-fall Run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 11. Spring-run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California: Historical Range and Distribution .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 12. Spring-run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California: Present Range and Distribution .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 13. Winter-Run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California: Historical Range and Distribution .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 14. Winter-run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California: Present Range and Distribution .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 15. Fall-run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California: Historical Range and Distribution .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 16. Fall-run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California: Present Range and Distribution .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 17. Late-fall Run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California: Historical Range and Distribution.....	after Chapter 1
Figure 18. Late-fall Run Chinook Salmon in the Central Valley of California: Present Range and Distribution.....	after Chapter 1
Figure 19. Steelhead Trout: <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> : California Central Valley .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 20. Steelhead, : Historical and Current Distribution in the San Francisco Bay Area: <i>Oncorhynchus mykiss</i> .....	after Chapter 1
Figure 21. Fish Passage Improvement Program Sacramento River and Tributaries .....	after Chapter 3
Figure 22. Fish Passage Improvement Program Lower Sacramento River and Delta Tributaries.....	after Chapter 3
Figure 23. Fish Passage Improvement Program San Joaquin River and Tributaries .....	after Chapter 3
Figure 24. Fish Passage Improvement Program Bay Area and the Delta .....	after Chapter 3
Figure 25. Flows recorded from USGS gage site number 11376550 near Cottonwood Coleman fish hatchery from 1961 to 2000 (USGS 2002). ....	3-5

Figure 26. Flows recorded from USGS gage station site number 11384000 located near Chico in Butte County (USGS 2002). .....	3-8
Figure 27. Flows are recorded from USGS gage station site number 11390000 near Chico in Butte County from 1930 to 2000 (USGS 2002).....	3-11
Figure 28. Flows recorded from USGS gage station site number 11154700 near French Gulch, Shasta County in years 1950 to 1993 (USGS 2002). .....	3-14
Figure 29. Flows measured from USGS gage station site number 11381500, in Los Molinos, Tehama County, from 1928 to 2000 (USGS 2002). .....	3-17
Figure 30. Flows were measured from USGS gage station site number 11378000 in Tehama County from 1902 to 1968 (USGS 2002). .....	3-20
Figure 31. USGS gage station site number 11421000 in Marysville, Yuba County for the period of 1943 to 2000 (USGS 2002).....	3-24
Figure 32. USGS gage station site number 11335000, at Michigan Bar Rd, Sacramento County. Graph generated from data received from 1907 to 2002 (USGS 2002).....	3-29
Figure 33. USGS gage station site number 11447300, Dry Creek Tributary near Roseville. Graph represents mean flow data received from 1963 to 1967. ....	3-31
Figure 34. USGS gage station site number 11425500 at Verona, Sutter County Graph represents mean data values taken from gage from 1929 thru 2000 .....	3-35
Figure 33. USGS gage station site number 11453500, in the town of Guenoc, Lake County from 1904 to 2000 (USGS 2002).....	3-39
Figure 35 Mean Streamflow at USGS stream gage 11309500 on the Calaveras at Jenny Lind from 1907 to 1966 (USGS 2002). .....	3-43
Figure 36. Mean streamflow data from USGS stream gage station 11272500 on the Merced River at Stevenson from 1940-1995 (USGS 2002). .....	3-46
Figure 37. Mean Stream flow of USGS stream gage station 11302500 on the Stanislaus River at Ripon from 1940-2000 (USGS 2002). .....	3-49
Figure 38. Mean streamflow for USGS stream gage 11179000 on Alameda Creek at Niles from 1891-2000 (USGS 2002). .....	3-53
Figure 39. Mean streamflow for stream gage station 1117660 on Arroyo Valle in Pleasanton from 1957-1985 (USGS 2002). .....	3-55
Figure 40. Mean streamflow at stream gage station 11176200 on Arroyo Mocho at Pleasanton from 1962-1985 (USGS 2002). .....	3-57
Figure 41. Mean stream flow for USGS stream gage station 11164500 on San Francisquito Creek at Stanford University from 1930-2000 (USGS 2002). .....	3-61
Figure 42. Mean stream flow for USGS stream gage station 11163000 on Los Trancos Creek at Stanford University from 1930-1941 (USGS 2002). .....	3-63
Figure 43. Mean stream flow recorded at USGS stream gage 11337500 on Marsh Creek in Byron from 1953-1983 (USGS 2002). .....	3-65
Figure 44. Mean streamflow recorded at USGS stream gage station 11181040 on the San Lorenzo River in San Lorenzo from 1967-2000 (USGS 2002). .....	3-68
Figure 45. Fish Passage Improvement Program Location of Structures in Streams and of Priority Structures .....	after Chapter 4
Figure 46. Critical Habitat for Winter-run Chinook Salmon and Locations of Structures in Streams .....	after Chapter 4
Figure 47. Critical Habitat for Spring-run Chinook Salmon and Locations of Structures in Streams .....	after Chapter 4
Figure 48. Critical Habitat for Central Valley and Central California Coast Steelhead ESUs and Locations of Structures in Streams .....	after Chapter 4
Figure 49. Fish Passage Improvement Program Sacramento River and Tributaries .....	after Chapter 4
Figure 50. Fish Passage Improvement Program Lower Sacramento River and Delta Tributaries .....	after Chapter 4
Figure 51. Fish Passage Improvement Program San Joaquin River and Tributaries .....	after Chapter 4
Figure 52. Fish Passage Improvement Program Bay Area and Delta .....	after Chapter 4

## Tables

Table 2-1. Dams Removed in California .....	after Chapter 2
---	-----------------



Table 3-2. Sacramento River Matrix.....	after Chapter 3
Table 3-3. Sacramento River Passage Matrix .....	after Chapter 3
Table 3-4. Lower Sacramento River Matrix.....	after Chapter 3
Table 3-5. Lower Sacramento River Passage Matrix.....	after Chapter 3
Table 3-6. San Joaquin River Matrix.....	after Chapter 3
Table 3-7. San Joaquin Passage Matrix.....	after Chapter 3
Table 3-8. Bay Area River Matrix .....	after Chapter 3
Table 3-9. Bay Area Passage Matrix .....	after Chapter 3
Table 4-1. Priority Projects of the Fish Passage Improvement Program that Meet Level I and Level II Criteria .....	after Chapter 4

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## Executive Summary

Since the 1800s, salmon and steelhead habitat in California has declined 95 percent, from 6,000 miles of rivers and streams to 300 miles; and with this decline in habitat, there has been a decrease in salmon and steelhead fish populations. Recognizing the importance of saving and restoring the populations of salmon and steelhead, many government and private organizations have responded, working to reopen streams and rivers to these anadromous fish.

Initiated by CALFED in 1999, the Integrated Storage Investigations Program was launched to study increased water storage capacity in both surface reservoirs and underground aquifers, intending to meet the needs of California's growing population and to provide flexibility to improve water quality and restore ecosystems. One element of this integrated suite of investigations is the Fish Passage Improvement Program.

Now a part of the CALFED Ecosystem Restoration Program, the Fish Passage Improvement Program is a partnership-building effort to improve and enhance fish passage in Central Valley and Bay Area rivers and streams, working with local, state, and federal agencies and stakeholders to plan and implement projects to remove barriers that impede migration and spawning of anadromous fish.

This inaugural issue of Bulletin 250, for the first time, presents aggregated information on fish passage impediments and activities to address the decline in riverine habitat within the Fish Passage Improvement Program geographic scope (Figure 1).

**Chapter 1** describes the problem, outlining the historical and current distribution of salmon and steelhead listed as threatened or endangered and their critical habitat in the Central Valley and Bay Area. It also shows the distribution of evolutionarily significant units of salmon and steelhead in the Central Valley and Bay Area, the distribution of critical habitat for endangered or threatened Chinook salmon and steelhead, and the distribution of essential fish habitat for four Chinook salmon runs.

**Chapter 2** gives a historical perspective of fish passage improvement in California, describing the Fish Passage Improvement Program and its efforts to solve the problem outlined in Chapter 1.

**Chapter 3** describes stream fish populations and habitat in Central Valley and Bay Area streams and rivers where the Fish Passage Improvement Program supports projects.

**Chapter 4** describes projects supported by the Fish Passage Improvement Program on streams listed in Chapter 3.

**Figure 1. Fish Passage Improvement Program Geographic Scope**

Figure 1

